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Consumer Price Index, Washington-Baltimore–November 2014

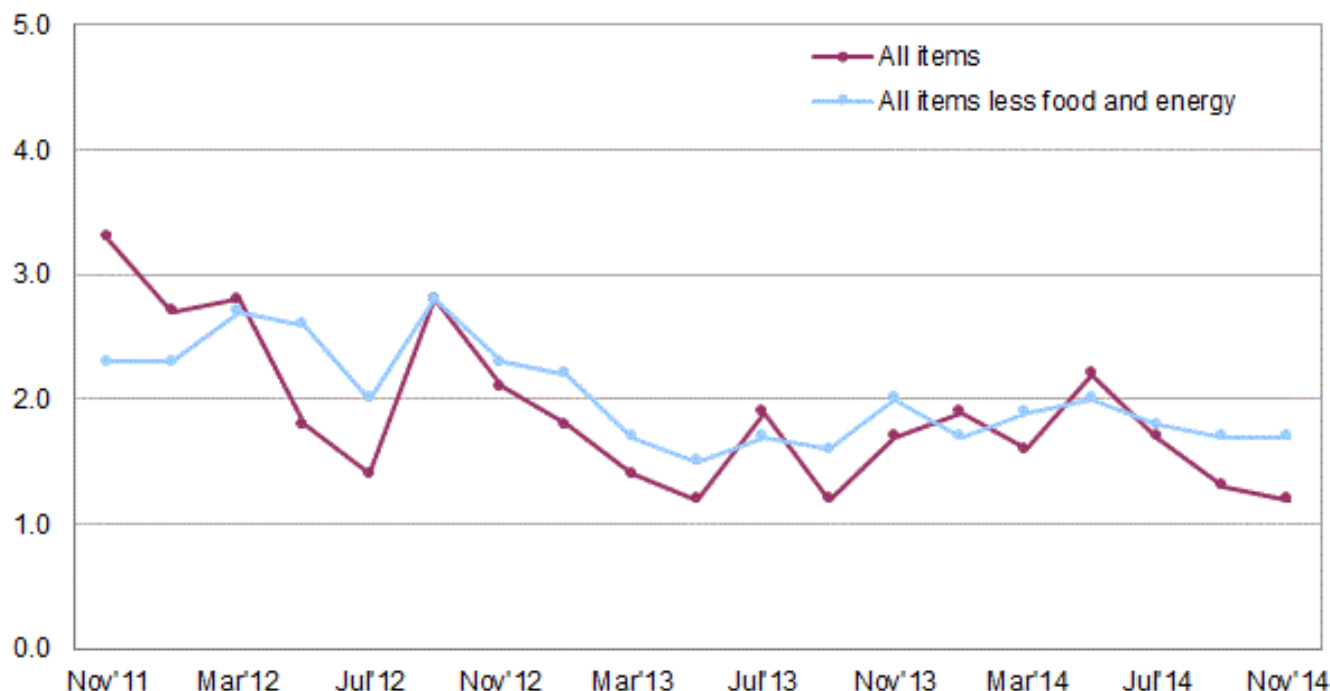
Area Prices Down 0.4 Percent Since September; Up 1.2 Percent Over the Year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Washington-Baltimore area declined 0.4 percent from September to November, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that a 9.4-percent drop in the energy index was partially offset by increases in the all items less food and energy (0.3 percent) and food (1.0 percent) indexes.. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, two-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U rose 1.2 percent, due mostly to a 1.7-percent advance in the all items less food and energy index.(See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) The food index also increased since November 2013, up 3.0 percent, while the energy index fell 7.7 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. 12-month percent change in CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), Washington-Baltimore, November 2011 to November 2014 (not seasonally adjusted)

Percent change



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

After being unchanged in September, the food index rose 1.0 percent over the last two months. Higher prices for beef and veal, as well as fresh vegetables, helped push food at home prices up 0.9 percent. Food away from home prices also increased, up 1.0 percent.

Food prices rose 3.0 percent over the year, as prices for both components also increased. Food at home prices increased 3.1 percent and those for food away from home advanced 2.8 percent since last November.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, dropped 9.4 percent since September, led by falling gasoline prices. The 13.8-percent drop in gasoline prices was the largest two-month decline in nearly six years. A 6.0-percent seasonal decrease in electricity prices, as well as lower fuel oil prices, also contributed to the overall decline in the energy index. Moderating these decreases were higher utility (piped) gas service prices, up 1.6 percent over the last two months.

Energy prices decreased 7.7 percent over the year, due mostly to lower gasoline prices, down 12.1 percent. Both the electricity index and utility (piped) gas service index also decreased since November 2013, down 2.7 and 2.5 percent, respectively.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.3 percent since September, due mostly to higher shelter prices, up 1.0 percent. Moderating the overall rise in the all items less food and energy index were lower prices for apparel, down 5.4 percent.

Since November 2013, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.7 percent. The advance was due largely to an over-the-year increase in shelter prices (3.1 percent), as the owners' equivalent rent of residences index was up 2.9 percent. Lower prices for apparel (-1.1 percent), recreation (-0.2 percent), and medical care (-0.2 percent), moderated the increase in the all items less food and energy index since last November.

Table A. Washington-Baltimore CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index (not seasonally adjusted)

Month	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014	
	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month
January.....	-0.7	1.0	0.3	2.6	1.0	2.3	0.4	2.7	0.1	1.8	0.4	1.9
March	0.7	0.4	0.4	2.3	1.2	3.0	1.3	2.8	0.9	1.4	0.6	1.6
May.....	0.5	-0.2	0.2	1.9	1.0	3.9	0.1	1.8	-0.2	1.2	0.4	2.2
July	1.1	-0.9	0.0	0.8	0.1	4.1	-0.2	1.4	0.5	1.9	0.0	1.7
September.....	0.1	-0.8	0.5	1.3	-0.1	3.4	1.3	2.8	0.6	1.2	0.2	1.3
November.....	-0.2	1.6	0.1	1.6	-0.1	3.3	-0.7	2.1	-0.2	1.7	-0.4	1.2

The January 2015 Consumer Price Index for Washington-Baltimore is scheduled to be released on February 26, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 4,000 housing units and approximately 26,000 retail establishments—department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The **Washington-Baltimore, D.C.-Md.-Va.-W.Va., Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes the District of Columbia; Baltimore City and the counties of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, and Washington in Maryland; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, King George, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren in Virginia; and the counties of Berkeley and Jefferson in West Virginia.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Washington-Baltimore, D.C.-Md.-Va.-W.Va. (December 1997=100 unless otherwise noted)

Expenditure category	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Sep. 2014	Oct. 2014	Nov. 2014	Nov. 2013	Sep. 2014	Oct. 2014
All items (1)	155.522	-	154.926	1.2	-0.4	-
Food and beverages (1)	153.457	-	155.180	3.1	1.1	-
Food (1)	154.997	-	156.503	3.0	1.0	-
Food at home	147.557	146.811	148.916	3.1	0.9	1.4
Food away from home (2)	161.777	-	163.444	2.8	1.0	-
Alcoholic beverages (2)	132.529	-	136.427	4.2	2.9	-
Housing (1)	165.115	-	165.678	2.2	0.3	-
Shelter	175.088	175.262	176.801	3.1	1.0	0.9
Rent of primary residence (1) (3)	193.916	194.871	196.187	2.8	1.2	0.7
Owners' equivalent rent of residences (3)	175.441	175.629	177.217	2.9	1.0	0.9
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (3)	175.461	175.648	177.219	2.9	1.0	0.9
Fuels and utilities	188.396	-	182.055	-1.3	-3.4	-
Household energy	181.300	177.346	173.324	-2.9	-4.4	-2.3
Energy services (3)	172.523	168.814	164.845	-2.7	-4.5	-2.4
Electricity (3)	184.693	179.864	173.615	-2.7	-6.0	-3.5
Utility (piped) gas service (3)	119.273	118.886	121.221	-2.5	1.6	2.0
Household furnishings and operations	89.925	-	88.755	-1.2	-1.3	-
Apparel (1)	102.863	-	97.335	-1.1	-5.4	-
Transportation (1)	153.435	-	148.033	-3.4	-3.5	-
Private transportation	152.413	-	145.174	-3.7	-4.7	-
Motor fuel	284.576	267.532	245.509	-12.0	-13.7	-8.2
Gasoline (all types)	284.091	266.997	244.924	-12.1	-13.8	-8.3
Gasoline, unleaded regular (4)	286.939	268.738	245.586	-12.8	-14.4	-8.6
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade (4)	284.977	269.228	250.945	-9.9	-11.9	-6.8
Gasoline, unleaded premium (4)	289.101	276.014	255.785	-9.0	-11.5	-7.3
Medical care (1)	171.079	-	171.552	-0.2	0.3	-
Recreation	116.923	-	116.664	-0.2	-0.2	-
Education and communication	148.442	-	148.518	3.1	0.1	-
Other goods and services (1)	179.638	-	179.753	2.1	0.1	-
Commodity and service group						
Commodities	131.717	-	128.759	-0.8	-2.2	-
Commodities less food and beverages	119.596	-	114.194	-3.4	-4.5	-
Nondurables less food and beverages	154.279	-	144.853	-4.3	-6.1	-
Durables	83.093	-	81.559	-1.9	-1.8	-
Services	171.339	-	172.409	2.2	0.6	-
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care (1)	154.576	-	153.907	1.3	-0.4	-
All items less shelter	145.698	-	144.017	0.1	-1.2	-
Commodities less food	120.225	-	115.236	-3.0	-4.1	-
Nondurables	153.126	-	149.513	-0.5	-2.4	-
Nondurables less food	152.447	-	144.188	-3.6	-5.4	-
Services less rent of shelter	167.940	-	168.228	1.2	0.2	-
Services less medical care services	171.478	-	172.579	2.5	0.6	-
Energy (1)	224.730	215.235	203.588	-7.7	-9.4	-5.4
All items less energy	150.171	-	150.723	1.9	0.4	-
All items less food and energy (1)	150.349	-	150.752	1.7	0.3	-

Footnotes

(1) For Washington-Baltimore, indexes on a November 1996=100 base.

(2) For Washington-Baltimore, indexes on a November 1997=100 base.

(3) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

- Data not available.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.